

Tale *Feathers*

December
2005 -
January
2006

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Join The Flock At The SLAS Holiday Party

On Sunday, December 4, 2005 from 1-4 p.m.
At The Green Center

Once again this year, the St. Louis Audubon Society will be joining the Webster Groves Nature Study Society to celebrate the holidays at The Green Center in University City. This special event will be held on Sunday, December 4 from 1 to 4 p.m. The Green Center serves its surrounding community as a natural gathering place with youth programs, nature workshops, and herb and prairie gardens in the heart of University City. Its mission is conservation, education, and enjoyment of the natural world. The Center offers a congenial atmosphere of meeting rooms surrounded by a beautiful outdoor space.

Please bring an appetizer, dessert or casserole to share. Beverages will be provided.

While you are enjoying the holiday atmosphere and refreshments, be sure to enter the free drawings for nature-related gift items donated by our members and friends! There will also be a display of holiday decorations made of natural materials, provided by Shaw Nature Reserve's Barb Troutman.

The Center has agreed to allow limited parking in the driveway for senior members attending the party. Others are asked to park in the Kaufman Park lot next to the Center.

Directions to The Green Center at 8025 Blackberry Avenue:
From Highway 40: Turn north on Hanley Road and continue to Delmar Blvd. Continue on Hanley Road to Blackberry Avenue, the fourth street north of Delmar. Turn left (west) on Blackberry Avenue.
From Interstate 170: Take the Delmar Blvd. Exit from I-170. Go east on Delmar three stoplights to North and South Road. Turn left (north) and proceed to Blackberry Avenue. Turn left (west) on Blackberry Avenue.

St. Louis Audubon Society

Opportunities and Announcements

Mission Statement
of
The St. Louis
Audubon Society

Help our community
sustain biological
Diversity through
Nature.

Goals
To foster an aware-
ness and under-
standing
Of birds and other
wildlife and their
habitats

To educate our com-
munity so people
can make
Informed decisions
about the natural
world.

Bird Workshop for Educators

Are you interested in using birds to teach concepts and skills in science? This workshop will present **Flying Wild**, a new program of the Council for Environmental Education which introduces middle school students to bird conservation through standards-based classroom activities and environmental stewardship projects. Activities can easily be adapted for upper elementary students. Support materials, including **Flying Wild: An Educator's Guide to Celebrating Birds**, will be provided.

When: Saturday, January 21, 2006 9:00-12:00pm

Where: Powder Valley Nature Center

A materials fee of \$10.00 is due on the day of the workshop.

To register call 636-458-2236

Instructor: David Bruns, Conservation Education Consultant with MO Department of Conservation at Rockwoods Reservation.

National Audubon Society's Annual Christmas Bird Count Update

At the time
of printing this publication, only one CBC has been
scheduled in this area.

The Date is January 1, 2006 in the Orchard Farm area of St. Charles county. Contact Randy Korotev either by email: rlkorote@artsci.wustl.edu or call: 314-962-0544.

You can also check the National Audubon Society's website for links to locations around the country. This webpage contains general information concerning the CBC, historical info, summaries and trends.

If you would like to participate in one of these fun events, contact the compiler for the count in your area. There is a participation fee of \$5.00 This fee is forwarded to American Bird to help cover the CBC expenses

Locally, check:

<http://mobirds.org/CBC/SBSschedule.asp>

The Saint Lois Audubon Society
would like to acknowledge
Harry and Charity Sherrington
for their donation.
Thank-you!

St. Louis Audubon Explores Two Rivers NWR

Pat Leuders

Saturday, October 15th, approximately 20 members of St. Louis Audubon enjoyed a beautiful day at Two Rivers Wildlife Refuge, visiting the Gilbert Lake area, the Swan Lake levee, the volcano, the pump road, and the visitor's center.

At dawn, while crossing the river on the Alton Bridge, the Peregrine Falcon was seen standing guard on the western tower. When we arrived at the Gilbert Lake parking lot, the sun was rising, creating a beautiful scene as the Great Blue Herons and Great Egrets searched for their breakfast. A Black-throated Green Warbler was seen in the trees at the parking area as was a Red-headed Woodpecker; many Song, Swamp, Savannah and White-throated Sparrows, and a noisy Belted Kingfisher. Along the road we saw Pied-billed Grebes, a Yellow-billed Cuckoo; and, for many of us, our first Dark-eyed Juncos of the fall.

Two Rivers NWR was having their annual Open House and we were greeted at the Swan Lake Levee area by two friendly IOS volunteers. Large numbers of White Pelicans were swimming on the lake and a large flock of Eurasian Tree Sparrows and Yellow-rumped Warblers was seen in that area. A flock of mallards flew over our heads and one Black Duck was in formation with them.

Swan Lake had a large number of ducks which we viewed from both the volcano area and the pump road. They included: Gadwall, great looks at American Widgeon, Mallards, Shovelers, Pintail, Green-winged Teal, Ring-necked & Ruddy Ducks, Coots and Scaup.

The gravel road between the pump and the visitor's center was open for the day, which provided close-up looks at two Blue-morph Snow Geese, a Long-billed Dowitcher, Lesser Yellow-legs and Least Sandpipers.

Because of the open house, lunch at the visitor's center included a display of hawks and owls provided by Tree House. While we were eating, a trip member spotted a Merlin also having lunch in a nearby tree, and great scope looks were had by all! Kestrels spotted throughout the area gave us a three-falcon day.

Our day ended with an unsuccessful search of REDA for the Le Conte's and Nelson Sharp-tailed Sparrows. We did have great looks at Savannah, Lincoln, Vesper and Swamp Sparrows near Teal Pond.

Our field trips are listed in this newsletter, and we hope that more members of all birding levels will join us in the future. Come out with us and enjoy our beautiful birds and birding locations such as Two Rivers.

February Tale Feathers Preview:

Annual Dinner, March 31, 2006

Keynote Speaker: Carl Safina, Author and Ecologist

Membership Survey

Birding Trips for December, January and February
John Solodar

December 10, Saturday - Riverlands - This trip starts at 9:00 am and will be led by Mike Thelen. Bring lots of warm clothes as the winter wind can be quite stressful at RMBS. (RMBS is the now abbreviation for Riverlands which is now known as Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary.) We'll be looking for odd gulls, lots of ducks and maybe some surprises such as scoters. This is the time of the year when a lot of errant migrants make their appearance and RMBS is a good spot for them.

January 14, Saturday - Riverlands - This trip starts at 9:00 am and will be co-led by Paul Bauer and Dave Rogles. RMBS is our winter hotspot for interesting birds as it is the time of year when the really rare gulls often show up. With luck we will also have some Longspurs and Snow Buntings around. Again, dress warmly against the winter winds at RMBS. Some of those hunter's charcoal/iron filings hand warmers will also serve you well.

February 4, Saturday - Riverlands Paul Bauer and Dave Rogles team up again to lead our last-of-the-winter trips to Riverlands. The twist is that this is an afternoon trip starting at 1:00 pm which is handy for you late risers. We'll have a chance to see the gulls coming in to roost late in the day as well as to search for Short-eared Owls. Some good raptors might be around as well. There might be a drive into the Confluence Park for wintering sparrows. Once again, bring along the charcoal/iron filings hand warmers.

How to get there

Riverlands - Take Hwy 367 north from I-270. The designation changes to Hwy 67 just beyond the 4th traffic light but continue. Turn right on last road just before the Clark Bridge at the Mississippi River. (Fisca gas station at this turn.) Turn right on the first road and park in the Teal Pond parking lot.

The Puffin Project and Birds of Coastal Maine
An Audubon Camp Experience

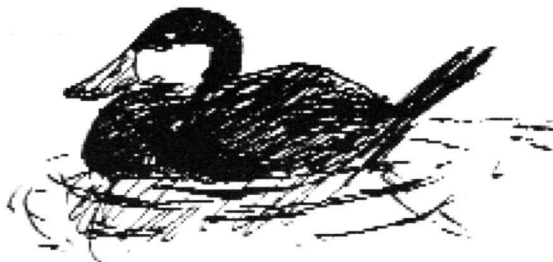
Mark your calendar for Tuesday, January 17 at 7:30 p.m. at the Creve Coeur Government Center.

The Atlantic Puffin, a small, pigeon-sized seabird that only visits the shore to breed over the short Maine summer, has been the subject of a reintroduction project for over 30 years. While still abundant in coastal Canada, the birds in Maine never recovered from near extermination by hunters in the late nineteenth century. Since 1973 a team of Audubon biologists and volunteers, called the Puffin Project, have been on the cutting edge of seabird research and restoration science in hope of returning this amazing bird back to its historical nesting grounds in coastal Maine.

Aaron and Angie Jungbluth will present an informative program on the birds of coastal Maine, with emphasis on the reintroduction of the Atlantic Puffins. They attended the week-long Workshop for Educators at Audubon's Hog Island Camp last summer. They will share their experiences of living on the island, learning from top environmental instructors and birding this unique location. Yet, the highlight of their visit was meeting the two dedicated founders of the Puffin Project, Dr. Stephen Kress and "Puffin" Pete Salmansohn and actually seeing the results of their efforts—wild puffins nesting on Eastern Egg Rock. Join us for this heart-warming story of the will of two men to reintroduce these birds to the Maine islands and perhaps get excited about planning your own trip to the Hog Island Audubon Camp!

EDUCATOR ALERT! St. Louis Audubon has been providing area educators tuition scholarships to this amazing facility for years. Board members will be available with applications and to answer any questions about the program. If you know an educator that might be interested, please bring them along – they need NOT be a member to receive the scholarship.

From I-270 and Ladue, go east on Ladue, left at the light at New Ballas, go ½ mile north to Creve Coeur Government Center at 300 N. New Ballas. The Government Center's multi-purpose room is on the ground level in the northwest corner.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Torrey Berger

This month I would like to highlight the program's administered by SLAS's Scholarships and Awards Committee, under the able leadership of our co-chairs, Lynne Breakstone and Julie Leemann.

As I have often mentioned before, in the field of conservation and environmental efforts, Audubon's specialty is education. Our scholarship programs are designed to assist in the development of future conservationist and to assist those currently involved in conservation education. First, we provide scholarships for high school juniors or seniors who have demonstrated leadership or accomplishments in any phase of conservation. The funds provided are to be used to study wildlife conservation or related fields in college. We also provide scholarship funds for biology graduate students who will use the funds to support research in bird conservation, wildlife ecology or related fields. Finally, we provide funds to professional teachers from the St. Louis area to be used to defray the costs of participation in an Audubon Ecology Camp or Workshop for educators or similar experiential teacher workshop.

In addition to the scholarships, we consider annually several awards to persons who have in one way or another advanced the mission of SLAS. Such awards are: Outstanding Natural Resource Legislator, St. Louis Audubon Education Award; St. Louis Audubon Conservation Award, St. Louis Audubon Volunteer Award. The highest award conferred by SLAS is The Robert J. Terry Lifetime Achievement Award which honors a SLAS member for years of dedication, commitment and leadership in service to the Audubon Society and the natural resource community.

If you are, or know of someone who is, a candidate for one of our scholarships, or if you would like to suggest a candidate for one of our awards, please contact Lynne at 314-726-4772 or Julie at 636-861-1490.

(Editor's note: see following page for complete list of awards)

+ + +

On a separate note, I would also like to announce an exciting new project recently undertaken by SLAS. The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) with the assistance of The Audubon Society of Missouri (ASM) has started a project to establish a web-based database to collect bird species occurrence records at all MDC conservation areas. The program will allow all of us to participate by birding these conservation areas and recording our sightings. Among other things, the accumulated data will provide a basis for a bird special hit for each Conservation Area. Specifically, SLAS has agreed to participate by "adopting" the B. K. Leach Memorial Conservation Area under this program. This means that we will survey the Area at least four times a year (once each season). Look for future announcements in Tailfeathers for the scheduling of these counts, which will be open to all who want to become citizen scientists by assisting in this project. No particular skill level is required. B. K. Leach consists of 4,314 acres with seasonal wetlands, Mississippi River frontage and flood plain, forest and prairie habitats. It is a wonderful place to bird. For further information or questions on this or other programs, please feel free to contact me at 314-579-9227.



St. Louis Audubon Society Scholarships and Awards

2005 St. Louis Audubon High School Student Scholarships

Recognizes those high school juniors or seniors who have demonstrated ability, leadership or accomplishment in any phase of conservation and who will use the funds from this scholarship to study wildlife conservation or related fields in college.

2005 St. Louis Audubon Scholarship in Graduate Studies

Recognizes a biology graduate student either from the St. Louis area or enrolled in a St. Louis area college or university who will use the funds from this scholarship to support his or her research in bird conservation, wildlife ecology or related fields.

2005 St. Louis Audubon Teacher Scholarships

Recognizes those professional teachers from the St. Louis area who will use the funds from this scholarship to participate in Audubon Ecology Camps and Workshops for educators or similar experiential teacher workshops.

2005 Outstanding St. Louis Audubon Volunteer

Honors a member of the St. Louis Audubon Society who has generously donated his or her time and talents over the last few years to the education and conservation programs or the operational activities of the St. Louis Audubon Society.

2005 Outstanding Natural Resource Legislator

Honors an individual who has made a significant difference in the actions of government at the local, state, or national level impacting the conservation of birds, other wildlife, and their habitats.

2005 St. Louis Audubon Education Award

Honors an individual, group or organization that has significantly contributed over many years to educating our community on birds and wildlife conservation in general, so people can appreciate and make informed decisions about our natural world.

2005 St. Louis Audubon Conservation Award

Honors an individual, group or organization that has significantly contributed over many years to the conservation of birds, other wildlife, and their habitats through professional service, volunteerism, or communications.

2005 Robert J. Terry Lifetime Achievement Award

The highest award conferred by our Society, this award honors a member of the St. Louis Audubon Society for his or her many years of dedication, commitment and leadership in service to our Audubon Society and the natural resource community.

Award Nomination forms can be obtained from
Julie Leeman or Lynn Breakstone
(Phone numbers are listed on the inside back page)
or
downloaded from our website:
www.stlouisaudubon.org



The Conservation Spirit of Christmas

Here we are again at that most wonderful time of year—Christmas! I really do enjoy the season and yet every year end up trying desperately to avoid becoming a frantic “shopper” stalking the malls for that perfect last-minute gift. Often, in doing so, I end up only somewhat satisfying the receiver and incur much guilt by contributing to needless consumption and often waste. Realizing some of you may have suffered a similar quandary, I thought I would provide some non-consumptive, personalized gift-giving options that have worked for me in the past and are all conservation-related.

Gift Memberships are always a nice thought especially if you know they are interested in the group’s mission. The usual suspects include Audubon and Sierra Club of course, but don’t forget about the Botanical Garden, the St. Louis Zoo, and other local groups.

However, my personal favorite that avoids making a perhaps unwanted membership commitment for someone is an “adoption donation.” Nearly every group that offers such adoptions will provide a certificate, some type of fact sheet and a year of “updates.”

At our own St. Louis Zoo you can adopt a specific chimpanzee from the Fragile Forest for as little as \$40.

Adopt ANY animal at the St. Louis Zoo, including tigers, elephants, polar bears, lemurs, penguins or macaws—to name a few.

Adopt an Atlantic Puffin thru National Audubon’s Project Puffin and receive updates throughout the year on your specific puffin.

Contribute to international conservation of tigers, pandas or gorillas through the World Wildlife Fund’s adoption program. Adoptions at the World Bird Sanctuary here in St. Louis begin at just \$50 and you can choose from numerous owls, parrots, hawks and eagles.

Help the Nature Conservancy preserve Amazon rainforest through their Adopt-an-Acre program (as little as \$75) or protect coral reefs thru Adopt-a-Reef.

Adopt a wolf at the Wild Canid Survival and Research Center in Eureka.

Every one of these adoptions can be handled online, or simply call the organization’s main phone number and ask about their adoption program. Whichever one you may choose, I think you will be very pleased with the outcome!

Happy Holidays to you, your loved ones and all the wonderful creatures with whom we share this planet!

Tale Feathers

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St. Louis Audubon Society 2004 - 2005

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St. Louis Audubon Society

Chapter Only Membership Application

Note: To receive the National Audubon Magazine, contact the National Audubon Society for an additional application.

Your membership dues will go directly to the St. Louis Audubon Society. Your membership dues support local issues that are important to you, programs at our general meetings, and *Tale Feathers*, our newsletter.

Dues are \$15.00 per year and cover all members living at the same address.

Please complete the form, enclose a check payable to SLAS, and mail to:

St. Louis Audubon Society, P.O. Box 220227, Kirkwood, Mo. 63122.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ZIP CODE _____

EMAIL ADDRESS (optional) _____ Phone (Optional): _____

Additional Support

Your additional support includes chapter only membership.

 Sparrow (25.00) Egret (35.00) Falcon (50.00) Eagle (100.00)

Gift Memberships (\$15.00) are a wonderful way to support St. Louis

Audubon and introduce others to our benefits and activities. Simply fill out the application for the recipient and include the information below. We will send them a gift card for you.

To: (nickname or preferred form of address) _____

From: _____